

## **Draft Community Engagement Approach Wenatchee Electoral Process Committee – 10/5/15**

### **Background:**

The resolution adopted by the city asks the ad hoc committee to "examine the City's electoral process, specifically whether dividing the City into districts for purposes of electing Council members would provide more equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in the City's political process." It also specifically points to the voting rights issues that precipitated a lawsuit in Yakima, because of its use of "at-large" districts.

The Committee is to recommend to the City Council whether to change our current at-large voting system to one where council members would be elected by districts.

### **Community Engagement:**

#### Purpose:

1. To inform and educate about the pros and cons of our current approach to electing city council members, discuss Yakima and its issue of unequal opportunity, seek input on possible changes.
2. To seek input on how the city can encourage greater participation and engagement in civic affairs and governance.

#### Methods:

1. Meetings to educate and seek input tailored to Latino and Anglo audiences:
  - Total of four meetings: two tailored for Latino community (Committee engages local Latino leaders to help design time, place, etc.)
  - Held in mid October-November
  - Invite participation of key leaders (social service, faith community, civic leaders, business leaders, etc). Thom Nees of Helping Hands, Aida Bound, Julie Kagele of Community Action, Misael Fajardo-Perez, Jorge Chacon, NW Justice Project, etc.
2. Online survey in English and Spanish, widely publicized
3. Engage word-of-mouth network in Latino Community and Spanish media

#### Meeting outline:

1. A succinct presentation of why the committee was formed and our progress to date, the risks involved with our current at-large election process, and a brief outline of the Yakima remedy. List pros and cons of changing.
2. A brief presentation on the desire to encourage and foster greater participation, engagement and involvement in civic affairs. We could mention the potential of developing local neighborhood associations, and highlight the work of United Neighborhood Association.
3. Public Reactions and Comments on:
  - The possibility of changing to electing council members by districts;
  - Development of neighborhood associations;
  - What barriers exist to participation and engagement;
  - What actions the city could take to foster participation and engagement.